

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6048  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
USMISSION USNATO  
EC COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1368

USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY; BELGRADE FOR CSCE DEL

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR SOPN DA FR  
SUBJ: FRENCH PROTEST OVER DANISH CRITICISM AND INTERFERENCE IN  
FRENCH INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
REF: COPENHAGEN 1158  
SUMMARY. LAST FRIDAY, THE DANISH AMBASSADOR IN PARIS WAS CALLED  
IN TO RECEIVE A DOUBLE-EDGED FRENCH PROTEST. THE FIRST CONCERNED  
THE DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S CRITICISM OF THE FRENCH BREAK WITH  
THE OTHER EC NINE BY TABLING A SEPARATE BELGRADE CONCLUDING DOCU-  
MENT. THE SECOND WAS OVER THE DANISH PRIME MINISTER'S "INTERFER-  
ENCE" IN FRENCH INTERNAL AFFAIRS BY SEEMING TO BACK A SOCIALIST  
VICTORY IN THE UPCOMING FRENCH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. THE DANES  
HAVE DEMURRED TO THE FIRST CHARGE AND APPARENTLY HOPE TO TURN  
ASIDE THE SECOND. ALTHOUGH GISCARD'S SUNDAY TV STATEMENTS HAVE  
BEEN GIVEN AN OMINOUS MEDIA INTERPRETATION HERE, IT WOULD APPEAR  
DOUBTFUL WHETHER THIS ADMITTEDLY SHARP CONTRETEMPS WILL HAVE  
SERIOUS OR LONG-LASTING AFFECT ON DANISH-FRENCH RELATIONS. END  
SUMMARY.  
1. THE COPENHAGEN WEEKEND PRESS HAS BEEN FULL OF THE ACCOUNT OF A  
FRENCH PROTEST TO THE DANES. REPORTEDLY THE DANISH AMBASSADOR IN  
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PARIS, PAUL FISCHER WAS CALLED IN BY THE QUAI LAST FRIDAY, FEB  
24, TO HEAR AN EXPRESSION OF FRENCH DISPLEASURE OVER TWO MATTERS.  
THE FIRST WAS DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER K.B.ANDERSEN'S BRIEFING OF  
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE HERE ON FEB 20. THE  
SECOND WAS DANISH PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN'S REMARKS CON-  
TAINED IN HIS SPEECH BEFORE THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB IN WASHINGTON  
THURSDAY, FEB 23.

2. THE BASIS FOR THE FIRST PROTEST WAS ANDERSEN'S CRITICISM OF THE BREAK BY THE FRENCH WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NINE IN TABLING A SEPARATE PROPOSAL AT BELGRADE. THE BASIS FOR THE SECOND WAS JORGENSEN'S "CALL" FOR A SOCIALIST VICTORY IN THE UPCOMING FRENCH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

3. OUR MFA SOURCES TELL US THAT ANDERSEN DID INDEED CRITICIZE THE FRENCH BREAK WITH THE NINE ON CSCE. THEY DO NOT HOWEVER, FIND ANDERSEN'S REMARKS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT POLITICAL COMMITTEE, WHICH WERE AFTER ALL MADE IN PRIVATE, PARTICULARLY REMARKABLE AND CERTAINLY COULD NOT PROVIDE LEGITIMATE CAUSE FOR THE FRENCH PROTEST. THIS WAS ALSO WHAT AMBASSADOR RISCHER TOLD THE QUAI.

4. FISCHER WENT ON, OUR SOURCES SAY, TO TELL THE QUAI THAT SINCE HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT JORGENSEN HAD SAID, HE COULD HAVE NO COMMENT ON THAT AND WOULD AWAIT CLARIFICATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM COPENHAGEN.

5. THE FEB 25 EDITION OF COPENHAGEN'S BERLINGSKE TIDENDE (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE) CARRIED WHAT WAS PURPORTED TO BE A DIRECT QUOTE FROM JORGENSEN'S NATIONAL PRESS CLUB APPEARANCE. (BERLINGSKE ACCOUNT WAS, OF COURSE, A DANISH TRANSLATION OF THE EXCHANGE IN WASHINGTON IN ENGLISH.)

QUESTION: "WHAT EFFECT WILL THE FRENCH ELECTIONS HAVE ON THE EC - ESPECIALLY IF THE LEFT WING SHOULD WIN - WILL IT SEVERELY RESTRICT FUTURE FRENCH COOPERATION?"

ANSWER: "...YOU MAY NATURALLY ASK ME...WHETHER IT DEPENDS ON WHO WINS. I WILL SAY, MITTERAND. HE IS A PERSON AND REPRESENTS A PARTY I COOPERATE WITH A GREAT DEAL. WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE SAME CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIALIST DEMOCRATS, AND THEREFORE I BELIEVE THAT HE WOULD ALSO BECOME A GOOD LEADER IF HE WERE ELECTED."

6. ALTHOUGH OUR FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES HAVE EXPRESSED CHAGRIN PRIVATELY THAT JORGENSEN SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE FRENCH ELECTIONS, THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO PUT THE BEST FACE ON IT VIS-A-VIS THE FRENCH AND, AT LEAST OVER THE WEEKEND, WERE PLANNING TO HAVE AMBASSADOR FISCHER SIMPLY TRANSMIT THE TEXT OF JORGENSEN'S REMARKS TO THE QUAI WITHOUT COMMENT. MFA REGARDS THE FRENCH REACTION AS PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY GISCARD'S READING OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL IMPERATIVES AND NOT SOMETHING TO BE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF DANISH-FRENCH BILATERAL RELATIONS.

7. MORE RECENTLY, HOWEVER, GISCARD HIMSELF APPEARS TO HAVE ENTERED THE PICTURE THROUGH HIS STATEMENT ON FRENCH TV SUNDAY AFTERNOON FEB 26. ACCORDING TO THE REUTERS STORY IN TODAY'S POLITIKEN (INDEPENDENT LEFT OF CENTER), GISCARD WAS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS: "...IF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CHANGE ITS ATTITUDE, THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES MUST FEELTHEMSELVES FORCED TO DRAW THE NECESSARY CONCLUSION." GISCARD REPORTEDLY ADDED, "MR JORGENSEN'S STATEMENTS ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE OBLIGATIONS RESTING ON A COUNTRY PRESIDING OVER THE EC COUNCIL FOR SIX MONTHS".

8. FINALLY, THIS MORNING DANISH RADIO NEWS SPECULATED THAT GIS-

CARD'S WORDS COULD BE INTERPRETED TO MEAN THAT THE FRENCH WULD ATTEMPT TO REMOVE DENMARK FROM ITS PRESENT POSITION AS EC PRESIDENT AND THAT GISCARD MIGHT NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE APRIL 7-8 EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN COPENHAGEN.

9. COMMENT: IT SEEMS TO US THAT ALTHOUGH JORGENSEN'S REMARKS IN WASHINGTON WERE UNFORTUNATE, THE FRENCH REACTION WAS SHARPER THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. WE WOULD ALSO AGREE WITH THE DANES THAT WHAT ANDERSEN TOLD THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT POLITICAL COMMITTEE WAS UNEXCEPTIONABLE. WE DOUBT VERY MUCH WHETHER ANY OF THIS WILL HAVE A VERY LASTING EFFECT ON DANISH-FRENCH RELATIONS NOR CAN WE CONCEIVE THAT ANY MOVE WOULD BE TAKEN TO PUSH THE DANES OUT OF THE PRESIDENCY CHAIR.

10. HAVING SAID THIS, HOWEVER, THIS INCIDENT IS THE SHARPEST CONTRETEMPS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN A NUMBER OF YEARS.

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BEFORE THIS INCIDENT OCCURRED, THE DANES WERE STILL SMARTING BECAUSE OF THEIR FEELING OF HAVING BEEN "CHEATED" BY THE FRENCH ON BELGRADE AT THE FEB 14 EC FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING (REFTEL). END COMMENT.

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## Message Attributes

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